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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

Friday, September 15, 1944

SUBJECT: "Utility Grade Meat for Sunday Dinner" Information from the Bureau of Home Economics and Human Nutrition

It's Friday. Time to think about stocking up groceries for the weekend and buying meat for Sunday dinner.

If you're like many housewives in America, you've been taking advantage of the point-free Utility grade meat on the market since August. You've found that Utility grade beef makes good eating if it's properly prepared and seasoned. You've had Swiss steaks and pot roasts and beef pies. Now you're thinking of some new way to cook point-free beef. Some way that'll make Dan and Brother and Sister pass their plates and say, "I'd like some more, please."

Here are some suggestions from food specialists in the United States Department of Agriculture.

Have you tried fricassee of beef with dumplings? Cut the meat into small cubes and sprinkle with salt, pepper and flour. Brown it in fat and add an onion. Then add enough water to cover the meat, put a lid on the pan and cook slowly until tender. Have the dumplings ready to drop in the broth just as soon as you take the meat up. To make a gravy of the broth add a little flour and cold water before you put the dumplings in. Takes about 15 minutes for fluffy dumplings to cook through. You'll want to serve the fricassee and dumplings at once, while they're piping hot.

Another possibility is beef birds - a dish "fit to set before the king". Easy to make too. Buy steak meat for these. Round steak does best because it cuts into the right shape. Have your butcher slice it about a half inch thick. Then cut strips from two to three inches wide and about four inches long. Each strip makes a bird.

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Pound the strips to make them tender. The pounding also flattens them so that they can be rolled around the stuffing easily.

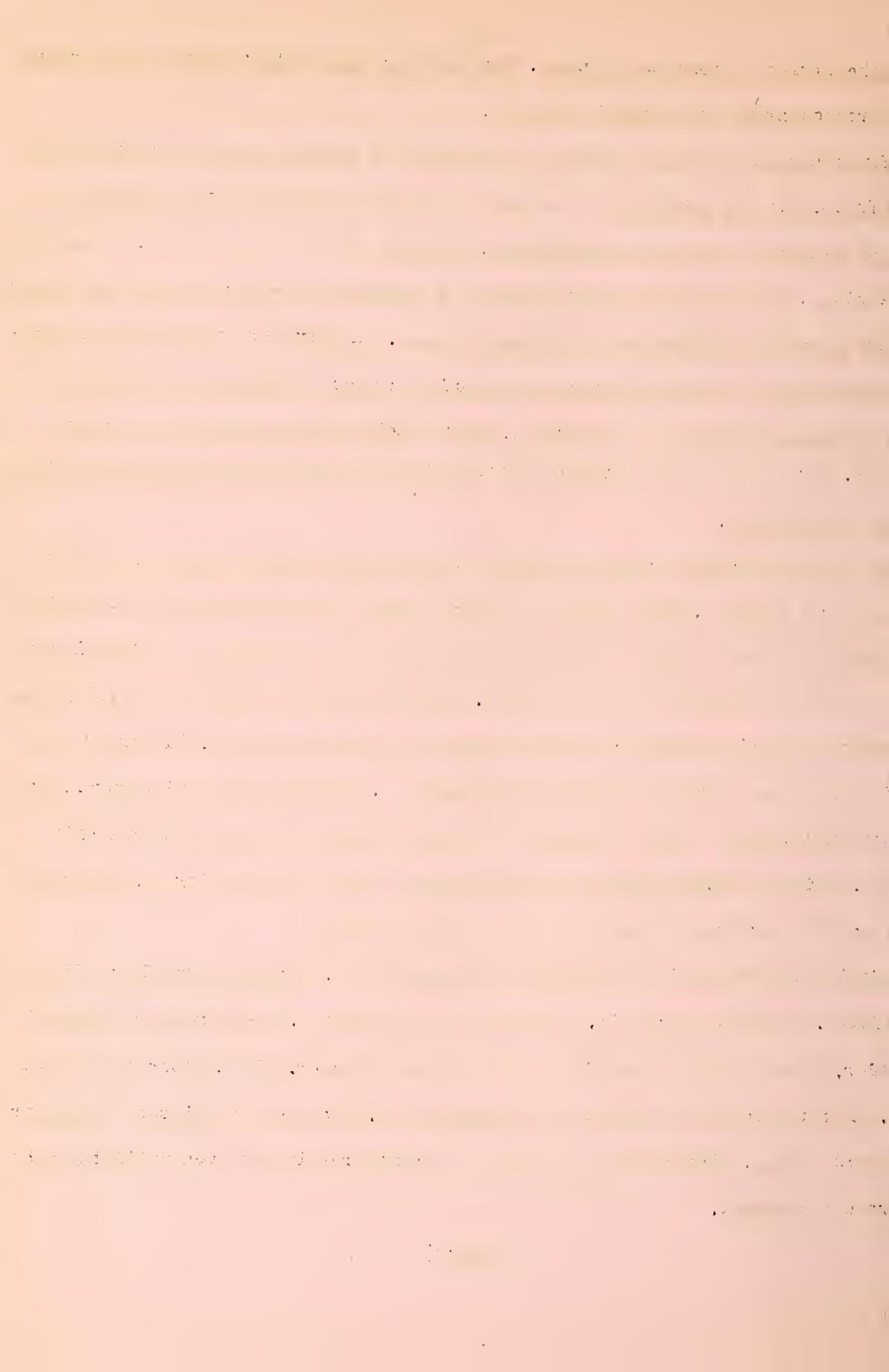
You can change the basic recipe for stuffing by adding raisins or some other dried fruit. Lay the stuffing on the strip, roll the strip and tie it firmly in place and the bird is ready for braising. Drop the birds in fat and brown carefully on all sides. Then cover and cook either in a moderate oven or on top of the stove.

Here's another suggestion for Sunday dinner. A shoulder of veal offers tempting possibilities. Boned, braised and stuffed it can be delicious. Four to six pounds of veal make about six servings. But a well-seasoned stuffing is a good extender. You can vary the stuffing too, by using different seasonings and combinations of seasonings.

One of my favorites is apple stuffing. Use chopped celery, onion, parsley and diced tart apples. Just follow your basic recipe for the dry type of stuffing. Bread crumbs from soft bread, seasoning and melted fat for richness. A tablespoon of fat to a cup of crumbs is about right. Cook the celery, onion and parsley for a few minutes in half of the fat and then remove them from the pan. Put the rest of the fat in the pan, heat and add the diced apples. Sprinkle them with sugar, cover and cook until tender. Then take the lid off and cook the apples until they're candied. Mix the candied apples with the celery, onion and parsley. Add the bread crumbs and the stuffing is ready to pile in the shoulder.

Notice I say "pile" the stuffing in the shoulder. Stuffing swells as it absorbs meat juice. So, don't pack it. Just pile it in lightly. Then roll the stuffed shoulder, tie it in place, sprinkle with salt and pepper. With flour too if you like. Put the roll on a rack in the roasting pan. Lay several pieces of suet or salt pork on top. Cover the pan and cook in a moderately hot oven until the meat is brown and tender.

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Utility grade beef is lean meat. That's also true of most veal. Lean meat calls for more skill in cooking. But appetizing, nourishing dishes of great variety can be made if you follow simple principles of meat cooking, principles which have been developed by recent scientific research. And the more imagination you put into the cooking, the more variety you'll obtain.

Cook the meat slowly at moderate, moist heat for a long time. Fat adds richness and flavor. Maybe you can get suet from your butcher when you buy lean meats. Or use bacon drippings or well-flavored salt pork. And you can develop the rich flavor by browning the meat in fat. The good cook either grinds all less tender meat or braises it in a tightly covered pot or pan. This combines browning with steaming and stewing.

Fricassee of beef with dumplings, beef birds or stuffed shoulder of veal, any one of these will make a good entree for Sunday dinner.

And when you serve them, you're not only saving money, you're saving ration points.

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